

oversight that we should have. We should have been tougher on some of the testimonies that we received. And I think that their suggestions of what the Iraqi Government should do aren't far off. But I think giving them deadlines when we have trouble passing legislation ourselves, I think that is a little unreasonable.

But then the biggest part is the arbitrary pullout date of March 2008. And I think you are setting up failure when you are doing that. That decision has got to be made by our generals in Baghdad.

Mr. CARTER. I thank the gentleman for letting us have this discussion tonight and allowing us to participate in this discussion. It has been a good one. I hope that the folks that are looking at this bill very hard and trying to decide how they will vote, I hope that they will vote to give our American soldiers all the resources they need, and give the trained professionals the opportunity to direct the fight, not certain Members of the United States Congress. And if that happens, I believe that we are on the road to success.

But we will have to have oversight, and we will have to watch it closely, and I for one am in favor of that, because what I care most about is the lives of those soldiers that I get to say good-bye to and welcome back home on the planes in Texas. And they matter to us in Texas, they matter to us in the United States. And we are proud of them, and we owe them everything we can to keep them alive, healthy, and successful. And I thank you for allowing me to participate.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. And I appreciate the gentleman's comments. And I also want to thank the gentleman from Georgia for allowing us this time tonight.

I think I would leave you and leave the American people not with my words and not with Members of Congress or even General Petraeus or some of the other military leaders, but I will leave you with the words I started off the evening with in my time here is the words of the young men and women that are boots on the ground, that have served not one tour, but two tours, and many of them three tours, when they looked me in my eye and they said, "Congressman, we want to go home. We want to spend time with our families. We want to go back to our communities. But, Congressman, we have a lot invested in this war, probably more than anyone else, and let us finish this job."

And so I urge my colleagues to listen to these young brave men and women that are doing phenomenal things for our country and for the people in Iraq. Listen to the soldiers: Let's finish this job.

Mr. KINGSTON. And, finally, let me say this: Let's defeat this bill. Let's come back on a bipartisan basis and come up with something better, something that gets Democrats and Republicans together in the name of the

troops, America, and international security.

It is in our interests to get the politics out of legislation like this and come back with something better, something more noble. And I believe we can do it, because we are Americans. Thank you.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLEIN of Florida). All Members of the House are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair and not to the television audience.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be here again to spend a small amount of time on behalf of the Speaker's 30-something Working Group. I thank the Speaker of the House for allowing us this opportunity to come and share with our colleagues and share with the American people some, I think, very important thoughts on what is happening today.

It was interesting, I got to hear the end of our colleagues' remarks from across this side of the aisle; and one of the things they have asked of this Congress, and you hear it over and over again as we talk about this war in Iraq, is that we have to finish the job. And I think there is a question that has to come before that subject. We have got to start asking a little bit more in this place what that job is. I think that is what this debate is about, in part, this week, and the debate that we have renewed here since we have brought the House under new leadership. What is the job that we need to be doing in order to keep this country safe?

The answers to that have come in piecemeal fashion, in dribs and drabs over the past year. But maybe the most substantial piece of information, new information that helped us decide what that job is, was when we got last summer evidence through the National Intelligence Estimate that started to tell us that if our job is what we think it is, which is to do everything we can to keep this country safe, then our own Intelligence Community, the dozens of intelligence officers and organizations that contributed to that report came up with one unfortunately startling conclusion, and that was that our efforts in Iraq are on more days making us less safe as a Nation than making us more safe.

Why? Because we have not only destabilized the region, but we have created what that report called a cause celebre in that country, where extremists and terrorists around the world now see Iraq as their proving ground, as

their training ground, and as their breeding ground.

So what we are debating here today is, I think, exactly the question that is posed by the other side of the aisle: Let's start talking about finishing that job. That job is ridding this world of fundamentalism and terrorism and extremism that poses a threat to us no matter where it is. It is not confined by the borders of some country in the Middle East that we occupy today. It doesn't know the borders of nation states. It poses a threat to us in all forms and from all places.

And so this debate this week, the supplemental bill which this House will vote on shortly, is about refocusing our mission, starting to deal with the realization and the reality of a conflict against terrorism that goes far beyond the borders of Iraq.

Part of what this bill is going to do is not only redeploy our forces, but also bring our troops out of harm's way in that country. You can't ask them to be a referee in what has become a religious conflict in that country, one that military leader after military leader, our own commanding general on the field there, General Petraeus, has said himself just earlier this month that there is no military solution to what has become a civil and religious conflict on the ground.

Job number one is to recognize the limits of our brave men and women in Iraq. They do an unbelievably admirable job every day. We are so grateful, especially those of us in the 30-something Working Group who consider those men and women our contemporaries, that they have chosen to defend this Nation so that others of us are able to serve this country in a different way. In order to honor them, in order to support those troops, we need to bring them out of a fight that our military forces cannot win alone.

But this is also about refocusing that effort, and I think that is what we have to keep on coming back to here, is there are fights still worth fighting in other parts of the world, such as Afghanistan, where we are on the verge of losing control of that country back to the very forces that gave cover and umbrage to the people who attacked this Nation on September 11. Remember, it was not Saddam Hussein that flew planes into tall buildings in New York, it was Osama bin Laden's organization called al Qaeda that used Afghanistan and the Taliban as its place and center of operation. And that country, as we have shifted more forces away from Afghanistan into Iraq, is now falling back into chaos, and part of our mission here has to be a realization that there are places worth fighting, and there are places in which military forces cannot quell ongoing violence. Afghanistan is still a fight worth fighting.

But it is also about focusing our efforts back here at home. And one of the secrets starting to come out, and thanks in part to the work of Representative WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and